

U.S. Serial No.: 10/021,809
Filed: October 30, 2001
Group Art Unit: 3731
Examiner: Uyen T. Ho
Atty. Docket No.: 101896-276 (DEP-5241)

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-20. (Canceled).

21. (Previously Presented) A cannula comprising:

a proximal end;

a distal end spaced apart a distance from the proximal end, the distal end being sloped such that the cannula has a short side and a long side; and

a lumen extending from the proximal end to the distal end, the lumen defining a working channel having a length sufficient to at least span from a skin incision to proximate a vertebra;

opposed cut-outs formed in the distal end and defining a lateral passageway oriented at an angle to the working channel, the opposed cut-outs being formed between the short side and the long side of the cannula.

22. (Previously Presented) The cannula of claim 21, wherein the lateral passageway is oriented generally perpendicular to the working channel.

23. (Previously Presented) The cannula of claim 21, wherein the lateral passageway is sized to pass an implant therethrough.

24. (Currently Amended) The cannula of claim 23 ~~21~~, wherein the lateral passageway is sized to pass ~~implant~~ is a spinal rod therethrough.

25-29. (Canceled).

30. (Previously Presented) A dilator for use in surgery, comprising:

an elongate body having a lumen extending therethrough between proximal and distal ends thereof, the lumen defining a working channel having a length sufficient to at least span from a skin incision to proximate a vertebra;

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the distal end of the elongate body having a sloped configuration such that the elongate body has a short side and a long side to facilitate positioning of the distal end against a vertebra; and
opposed cut-outs formed in the distal end between the short side and the long side, the opposed cut-outs defining a passageway adapted to receive a tool therethrough when the distal end of the elongate body is placed against a vertebra.